

Ransom Deal Snags On Details, Still Lives

By MICHAEL O'NEILL

Washington, Oct. 11 (NEWS Bureau).—The Cuban ransom deal is still "on the tracks," but a snag over details of the payoff package is likely to stall final agreement for days, highly informed sources disclosed tonight.

They reported that the latest delay was caused by a tangled discussion of items to be included in the ransom. They warned that there are many complicated angles and issues which are not apparent to the public.

However, the sources reported that Cuban Premier Fidel Castro had not made any dramatic new demands raising his price. They said there was every reason to believe that negotiations would go forward with at least a reasonable chance for success.

Up to this point, it was reported, the ransom deal has called for a package made up almost entirely of badly needed drugs and medical supplies. Only a small amount of food is likely to be included because the Kennedy Administration ruled against the use of government surplus stocks.

It was learned that Castro originally had demanded that clothing be included, but this has been dropped. The U. S. was said to be emphasizing drugs and medical supplies because the sending of these would be the most palatable, politically, to the American people.



Rep. William C. Cramer
Sees our prestige in peril

Demands Hearings

Informants close to the negotiations insisted that nothing has been nailed down yet regarding use of government funds to help pay the ransom. But they indicated that money reports put the total at between \$12 and \$17 million has been pledged as a contingency or guarantee.

The government's role has boiled up as a political issue in Congress. Rep. William C. Cramer (R-Fla.) today demanded "immediate hearings" to look into "disturbing" reports that some of the ransom would be paid "in dollars from CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) funds."

"This is about the greatest abuse of Presidential discretion I can remember in the history of this country," Cramer declared.

"If the Congress does not stop this unwholesome, degrading and humiliating blackmail deal, the prestige of the U.S. will be forever irreparably harmed."

Bids Him Lead Army

Rep. Barratt O'Hara (D-Ill.) fired back that Cramer ought to lead an invasion army because "if he shoots as loud as he talks, Lord help the enemy."

Informants said neither New York attorney James B. Donovan, who is negotiating the prisoner deal, nor the Castro regime had forwarded any list of what kind of drugs they want — or how much.

However, it was reported that the value of the medicines would probably be much greater than the cash paid because they would be offered at cost or less than cost. In addition, the drug manufacturers could claim tax deductions for the loss of income.

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